



DOT Employee Newsletter June 2001

From Hollace Twining, Principal, TASC Information Technology Operations

TVU (Transportation Virtual University) was recently awarded the Excellence in e-Learning Services Award and was featured in the Winners Circle at the recent Net-Global e-learning Conference. The award highlighted TVU's new on-line mentoring services, which provides the opportunity for students to talk with live, certified instructors for IT professional and computer courses 24 hours a day.

This has been an exciting time for TVU, as we've added a number of new services and courses to our portfolio. TVU now has over 1,800 courses on line, with new courses being added every month. Soon TVU will offer at minimal cost the full spectrum of searchable books on-line, including IT professional and business skills. Because of the great value, TVU has customers in most of the DOT agencies, as well as about 20 agencies

outside of DOT. Most exciting, TVU has formed partnerships with the USDA Graduate School, and the Department of Education to provide e-Learning services, including hosting, courseware licensing and the full spectrum Of e-learning services.

For more information, call 202-366-5019.

Great Learning and Development Information

For information on practical tools and strategies, informal and formal sources of training, and much more, check out our web site at www.tasc.dot.gov/hrm and click on Learning and Development Resource Guide.

Post 56 Military Service Deposit

Employees first employed under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) on or after 10/1/82, and any employee under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) with Post 56 military service must make a deposit to receive credit for retirement purposes. The law provides a 2-year interest-free grace period on deposits. Interest begins to accrue 2 years from the date the individual was first employed in a position subject to CSRS or FERS.

TSP Percentage Limit Reminder

The first step in raising the TSP investment limits kicks in with TSP's current open season which extends until 7/31. If you are under the FERS system, you will be able to boost your biweekly withholdings to as much as 11% of salary. If under the CSRS system, you will be able to invest up to 6%.

The maximum IRS limit is \$10,500. Once this limit is reached, the employee contribution plus the agency matching contribution will be cut off until the next year. To avoid this, FERS employees with high salaries might consider using the dollar amount of \$10,500 instead of 11%.

The percentage limits will go up by another percentage point in the following TSP open season, beginning 11/15, and will continue rising until they hit 15 percent under FERS and 10 percent under CSRS in 2005 and will be abolished effective in calendar year 2006.



**Simplicity is making the
journey of this life with just
baggage enough.**

Charles Dudley Warner



Please notify the center in advance if you need special accommodations for the programs below.



Career Connections Workshops

Top 10 Mistakes Made on Federal Applications -- 6/15
Using Multiple Intelligence on the Job -- 6/20
Project Management Techniques - 6/27

Workshops will be held in PL-402. Space is limited. Call x69392 [TTY 67630] for the times and to register.



Worklife Programs

[Call x66389 or TTY 67630]

- Caring for Your Young Child Seminar -- 6/14, PL-402, 12:30-1:30 pm
- New Mom Discussion Group -- 6/19, PL-402, 12-1:00 pm
- Smart Money Moves: Using Credit Wisely, 6/21, PL-402, 12-1:00 pm
- Summer Safety Fair -- 6/26, Nassif Building Plaza, 11:30-1:30 pm

Creativity

Here are 20 ways to be more creative. There are lots of other ways to get your creative juices flowing, but these may help. Pick one and try it today!

1. Go for brainstorming walks with a friend.
2. Ask a child for an answer.
3. Exercise during lunch.
4. Wake up at 3:30 am and work for two hours.
5. Tape-record your ideas while driving to work.
6. Trust your instincts.
7. Talk to people in other occupations.
8. Write down your dreams upon waking.
9. Nap once in awhile.
10. Redesign your office.
11. Arrive to work early.
12. Read different books.
13. Decorate your walls with inspired quotes.
14. Ask stupid questions.
15. Start an idea bank.
16. Experiment more.
17. Stay inspired.
18. Save time to be creative.
19. Test your limits often.
20. Stare out the window once in a while.

A creative climate is established by doing whatever you can with your current environment to shift your outlook. The material and resources you need to do this are actually all around you. The challenge is recognizing them.

--Mike Vance, Forest Service

Empowerment

- ✓ Leaders define the what and why.
- ✓ Team/employees define the how.

Did You Know?

You may withdraw your FERS contributions if you leave Federal employment. However, if you do, you will not be eligible to receive benefits based on service covered by the refund. There is no provision in the law for the redeposit of FERS contributions that have been refunded.

Words to the Wise

- ❑ A conclusion is the place where you got tired of thinking.
- ❑ Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.
- ❑ He who hesitates is probably right.
- ❑ Half the people you know are below average.
- ❑ No one is listening unless you make a mistake.
- ❑ Success always occurs in private, and failure in full view.
- ❑ To finish first you must first finish.
- ❑ You don't have to attend every argument you're invited to.
- ❑ Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a stroke of luck.

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